



INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS

WHAT ASSISTANCE CAN THE OAG PROVIDE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE?

THE OAG PROVIDES ASSISTANCE IN VARIOUS WAYS. WHETHER THROUGH HELPING VICTIMS RECOVER FROM THE FINANCIAL IMPACT OF CRIME, ASSISTING VICTIMS SEEKING WAYS TO KEEP THEIR ADDRESS CONFIDENTIAL, PROVIDING FUNDING TO ORGANIZATIONS WORKING DIRECTLY WITH VICTIMS, OR HELPING VICTIMS SAFELY OBTAIN CHILD SUPPORT, THE OAG IS COMMITTED TO ASSISTING VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE IN TEXAS.

CRIME VICTIMS' COMPENSATION (CVC) PROGRAM

The CVC Program reimburses victims of family violence for certain out-of-pocket expenses that are the result of the crime. To be eligible, victims must:

- Be a Texas resident or a U.S. resident who was a victim of a crime in Texas,
- Report the crime to the appropriate law enforcement agency within a reasonable time period,
- Complete a CVC application (www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/cvs/crime-victim-forms-applications), and
- Cooperate with law enforcement.

CVC can reimburse many types of costs related to family violence. These include, but are not limited to medical costs, counseling, loss of earnings, child care, and loss of support.

Victims of family violence may also be eligible for an award for rent and relocation assistance up to \$3,800 to pay for moving expenses, utility deposits, moving vans, and rent.

In the Texas 2017 fiscal year, CVC made a total of \$11.4 million in payments on 3,489 applications involving family violence.

If you would like to apply for CVC, your local law enforcement agency should have a crime victim liaison. They will be able to explain the program in greater detail, provide you with an application, and assist you in filling it out. Additionally, you can get an application directly from the CVC Program by calling **1-800-983-9933**, or download the application, fill it out and mail it in.

ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM (ACP)

ACP is a service victims of family violence can use to keep their home address confidential. The program provides a substitute address and mail forwarding service to these victims and members of their household. ACP should be utilized as a portion of an overall safety plan. It is not a witness protection program or a guarantee of safety. Applicants may:

- Meet with a local domestic violence shelter, sexual assault center, law enforcement, or prosecution staff member to discuss a safety plan and to enroll in the program, or
- Submit an application to the OAG with a copy of the protective order or crime report.

To obtain an ACP application, please call **1-888-832-2322**.

To get contact information for local family violence shelters, please visit the Texas Council on Family Violence website at www.tcfv.org or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at **1-800-799-SAFE**.

STATEWIDE AUTOMATED VICTIM NOTIFICATION SYSTEM (SAVNS)

Victims of family violence may participate in a notification system that will provide updates on their offenders who may still be a danger. SAVNS is a free service which provides information on jailed suspects/offenders and their scheduled release, incarceration, and upcoming court proceedings. This information, in English or Spanish, is provided through a single statewide toll-free telephone number: **(877) TX4-VINE [(877) 894-8463]** or through the VINE (Certified Vendor's system) website at www.vinelink.com.

PSEUDONYM FORM FOR VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE

Victims of family violence can have their name removed from public files and records concerning the offense. These records can include police summary reports, press releases, and records of judicial proceedings. To do so, victims must complete a Pseudonym Form and return it to the law enforcement agency investigating the offense. NOTE: the pseudonym is only used in records concerning the offense. So, it does not apply to any other publicly available records. The Pseudonym Form and instructions may be downloaded on our website (www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/cvs/crime-victim-forms-applications).

CHILD SUPPORT HELP FOR VICTIMS

The majority of family violence survivors say that they would like to pursue child support – if they can do so safely.^{xii} However, the child support process can present some risk for a survivor if he or she doesn't know what to expect. The attorney general's Child Support Division (CSD) recognizes that economic stability is critical to a survivor's journey to a life free of abuse. As a result, CSD has partnered with the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) (www.tcfv.org) over the past decade to enhance the safety of child support services and increase Texans' awareness of the resources available to them. CSD and TCFV have jointly developed several resources designed to help survivors carefully assess the benefits and potential risks of pursuing child support and to safety plan around the process. To get started, explore the links below:

- www.GetChildSupportSafely.org
- TCFV Online Service Directory (www.tcfv.org/service-directory/?wpbdp_view=search)

What Other Help May Be Available?

If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

For information on safety planning, please see Texas Council on Family Violence Personal Safety Plan (<http://bit.ly/2wULi6N>) and Texas Advocacy Project Personal Safety Plans (<http://bit.ly/2wk88R3>).

For more information on family violence and children, please contact the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.^{xiii}

HELPFUL RESOURCES

CVC Program Phone Number	(800)-983-9933
CVC Application & Pseudonym Form	www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/cvs/crime-victim-forms-applications
Address Confidentiality Program Phone Number	(888)-832-2322
Statewide Automated Victim Notification System	(877) TX4-VINE [(877) 894-8463]
VINE (Certified Vendor's system) website	www.vinelink.com
Get Child Support Safely	www.getchildsupportsafely.org
Texas Council on Family Violence	www.tcfv.org
TCFV Online Service Directory	www.tcfv.org/service-directory/?wpbdp_view=search
Texas Council on Family Violence Personal Safety Plan	http://bit.ly/2wULi6N
Domestic Violence Hotline	(800)-799-SAFE
Texas Advocacy Project Personal Safety Plans	http://bit.ly/2wk88R3



FAMILY VIOLENCE FACTS

WHAT IS FAMILY VIOLENCE?

The term family violence means violence that occurs between family members, within households, or between dating partners.

- "Family" means people related by blood or marriage, former spouses, people who parent the same child, a foster child and foster parent.
- "Household" means people living together in the same house, even if they are not related.
- "Dating violence" refers to people in an ongoing romantic or intimate relationship.

Under Texas law, family violence occurs when one member of a family or household acts in a way towards another member of the family or household that is intended to result in physical harm, assault, or sexual assault. Threats of physical harm, assault, or sexual assault by one member of the family or household also meet the definition of family violence.ⁱ

HOW PREVALENT IS FAMILY VIOLENCE IN TEXAS?

According to the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), 194,872 family violence incidents were reported to law enforcement in 2015. Additionally, an unknown number of incidents were not reported to law enforcement. The reported incidents produced 211,301 victims of family violence.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Texas Council on Family Violence estimates 1 in 3 Texans will be a victim of family violence during their lifetime.ⁱⁱⁱ

WHO ARE THE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE?

Anyone can become a victim of family violence. However, according to DPS, women make up 72% of victims.^{iv} In 2015, 158 women were killed by an intimate partner, or one every 2.3 days.^v Family violence also mostly affects people between 20 and 40 years of age, although it can affect people of any age.^{vi}

Family violence also affects people who may not be the main target of the offender. For example, children often witness family violence. Of the 158 Texas women who were killed by an intimate partner in 2015, 108 were mothers. In total, 281 Texans lost their mothers to intimate partner violence in 2015.^{vii}

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE ON VICTIMS?

Physical injuries are not the only effects of family violence. Many victims suffer from depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. Additionally, victims may attempt to cope by using drugs or alcohol.^{viii} Victims may also suffer economically as violence or the threat of violence causes them to miss work or lose jobs.^{ix}

Children who witness or are a victim of family violence respond in different ways. Some experience changes in their emotions and behavior such as increased anger or fear and an inability to sleep. Additionally, child victims may suffer long-term emotional effects, seek out drugs or alcohol, or develop unhealthy relationships.^x Other additional long-term effects include increased risk of suicide, and reduced social



and academic skills.^{xi}

RESOURCES

ⁱ <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/FA/htm/FA71.htm>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.dps.texas.gov/crimereports/15/citCh5.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://tcfv.org/resource-center/learn-the-facts/>

^{iv} <http://www.dps.texas.gov/crimereports/15/citCh5.pdf>, pg. 37.

^v http://2mg7g749lu2112sis323nkkn.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/2015_HTV_Report_web.pdf, pg. 3.

^{vi} DPS citation from above.

^{vii} http://2mg7g749lu2112sis323nkkn.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/2015_HTV_Report_web.pdf, pg. 12.

^{viii} <https://www.womenshealth.gov/violence-against-women/mental-health-effects-of-violence/>

^{ix} <http://ncadv.org/learn-more/statistics>

^x http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/childrenanddv_factsheet_1.pdf

^{xi} http://vawnet.org/sites/default/files/materials/files/2016-09/NRCDDV_TAG-ACEDV-April2016.pdf, pg. 1

^{xii} <http://bit.ly/2xGf5ji>